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Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 223979
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INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 R

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DRAFTED BY:AF/S-KMCCORMICK
APPROVED BY:S/S-O:LRFLEISCHER
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O 171725Z SEP 77 ZFF4
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY LONDON NIACT IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY PARIS NIACT IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY BONN NIACT IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 223979

NODIS
EYES ONLY FOR AMBASSADOR

FOLLOWING REPEAT PRETORIA 4813 ACTION SECSTATE SEP 15

QUOTE S E C R E T PRETORIA 4813

NODIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1, 2, 3
TAGS: PARM, MUNC, SF
SUBJECT: SOUTH AFRICAN NUCLEAR ASSURANCES

REF: (A) STATE 221176, (B) PRETORIA 4736, (C) STATE 218572,

1. I DELIVERED SECRETARY'S LETTER AND AIDE-MEMOIRE TO PIK BOTHA AT 4 P.M. LOCAL TIME. AFTER LEARNING OF SUBJECT OF MY VISIT, HE IMMEDIATELY CALLED IN BRAND FOURIE. THE 45 MINUTES WHICH FOLLOWED PROCEEDED ON TWO PLANES: (A) THE NUCLEAR ISSUE, AND (B) THE DETERIORATING STATE OF US-SOUTH AFRICAN RELATIONS.
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SECRET

PAGE 02 STATE 223979

2. BOTHA'S ATTITUDE TOWARD THE AIDE-MEMOIRE WAS THAT IT WAS "DISAPPOINTING" AND MADE HIM "VERY UNHAPPY." HE SAID THE PM IN HIS AUGUST 24 SPEECH HAD PROPOSED A DISCUSSION OF A VARIETY OF ISSUES: NPT, SAFEGUARDS, SAFARI I, KOEBERG AND PROBLEMS RELATING TO IAEA. NOW INSTEAD OF EXPRESSING A WILLINGNESS TO ENTER INTO

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009

DISCUSSIONS AS EQUALS, BOTHA SAID, YOU SEND US AN AIDE-MEMOIRE
TELLING US WHAT IS GOOD FOR US, THREATENING US FURTHER
ON THE KALAHARI SITE AND ENDING UP BY SAYING THAT IF WE DO A
SERIES OF THINGS, THIS WOULD ALLOW YOU TO SUPPLY LEU FOR KOEBERG.
THIS IS A SUPER POWER TELLING A SMALL POWER WHAT TO DO AND IT IS
NOT ACCEPTABLE TO US. WE ARE A SOVEREIGN STATE, RICHLY ENDOWED
AND CAPABLE OF DEFENDING OUR BORDERS. WE DETERMINE FOR OUR-
SELVES WHAT IS GOOD FOR US. OUR PM HAS MADE A SERIOUS,
BALANCED PROPOSAL TO SIT DOWN AND TALK ABOUT VARIOUS KEY ASPECTS
OF THE NUCLEAR ISSUE AND YOU HAVE IGNORED THIS IN FAVOR OF
TELLING US WHAT TO DO.

3. BOTH BOTHA AND FOURIE SPENT CONSIDERABLE TIME
ATTACKING OUR STAND ON THE KALAHARI STIE. BOTH LEAD
OFF ASKING WHY WE HAD THROWN IN THE KALAHARI ISSUE.
THE PM HAD GIVEN ALL THE NECESSARY ASSURANCES. SOUTH
AFRICA'S WORD WAS NOW BEING IMPUGNED. HE OBJECTED TO
OVERFLIGHTS WITH SATELLITES AND HIGH ALTITUDE AIRCRAFT.
HE DID NOT THINK THIS IS LEGAL AND WILL EVENTUALLY WANT
TO COME BACK TO US ON THIS "UNLAWFUL SPYING ACTIVITY."
FOURIE SAID THAT WE SHOULD KNOW THAT THE DRILLING AT
KALAHARI WILL CONTINUE. FIVE HOLES HAVE SO FAR BEEN
SUNK AND IN THE MONTHS AHEAD OUR SPY SATELLITE WILL
SEE THEM DRILLING SEVEN MORE. HE SUGGESTED WE
SAVE OUR MONEY BECAUSE THE PICTURES WOULD NOT SHOW ANYTHING
INCONSISTENT WITH SOUTH AFRICA'S ASSURANCES. BOTHA ADDED
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THAT NO NUCLEAR MATERIAL HAS BEEN INTRODUCED INTO THOSE
HOLES OR COME NEAR THE SITE.

4. REGARDING OUR RELATIONS, BOTHA REPEATED THE SAME THEMES
COVERED IN OUR FIRST CONVERSATION ON KALAHARI (PRETORIA 4211).
HE REGARDED THE AIDE-MEMOIRE AS ANOTHER EFFORT TO BEAT SOUTH
AFRICA INTO SUBMISSION. HE CLAIMED TO HAVE INFORMATION THAT
WE HAD CONSULTED OUR EMBASSIES ABOUT THE IMPACT OF CUTTING
OFF OIL TO SOUTH AFRICA. NOW YOU TRY TO LAY DOWN THE LINE WE
SHOULD FOLLOW ON OUR NUCLEAR POLICY. "IF YOU PERSIST IN THIS
COURSE, THEN I SEE GRAVE CONSEQUENCES FOR OUR RELATIONS."

5. I TRIED TO EXPLAIN THE MUTUAL INTEREST REPRESENTED BY OUR
APPROACH. I AGAIN STRESSED THAT OUR REPRESENTATION ON KALAHARI
WAS NOT DESIGNED TO STRANGLE SA (AS HE CLAIMED) BUT A MOVE
CONSISTENT WITH OUR WORLD-WIDE POLICY TO PREVENT THE PROLIFERATION
OF NUCLEAR CAPACITY. I REVIEWED THE ADVANTAGES FOR SOUTH AFRICA
IN SIGNING NPT AND AGREEING TO SAFEGUARDS. I AGAIN WENT OVER
THE IMPORTANCE OF WORKING TOGETHER ON RHODESIA AND NAMIBIA
AND TAKING MEANINGFUL ACTION ON FULL PARTICIPATION ON THE
DOMESTIC FRONT. HE BRUSHED ALL THESE ARGUMENTS ASIDE, REPEATING
THE EARLIER POINT THAT WE HAD NOT ADDRESSED OURSELVES TO THE

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009

PM'S SPECIFIC PROPOSAL FOR DISCUSSIONS ON AN EQUAL BASIS.

6. IN CONCLUSION I SAID I ASSUMED THEY WOULD WANT TO STUDY THE AIDE-MEMOIRE IN THE LIGHT OF THE SMITH-MOOSE-SOLE CONVERSATION. BOTHA OBSERVED THAT SOLE IS UNINSTRUCTED AND IS NOT FAMILIAR WITH THE SUBJECT. HE STATED THAT I SHOULD CONSIDER WHAT HE HAD TOLD ME AS THE REPLY. IF THERE WERE ANY FURTHER COMMENTS THEY WISHED TO MAKE, THEY WOULD CALL ME IN.

7. MY READING IS THAT BOTHA WILL HAVE LITTLE MORE TO SAY. I DO NOT ANTICIPATE A SHIFT TO A MORE FORTHCOMING ATTITUDE. THEIR RESPONSE TO FUEL FOR KOEBERG WAS THAT IF THEY SAW SOME WAY OF AVOIDING THE 200 MILLION RAND PENALTY CLAUSE, THEY WOULD DROP THE PROJECT RIGHT AWAY AND HAVE TOLD THE FRENCH SO.
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FURTHER, THEY CHALLENGED ME ON WHY FUEL FOR SAFARI I WAS NOT INCLUDED. I TOLD THEM I WAS UNINSTRUCTED. I BELIEVE THE ONLY WAY WE MIGHT BREAK OUT OF THIS IMPASSE IS THROUGH A MEETING BETWEEN AMBASSADOR SMITH AND APPROPRIATE SAG OFFICIALS LIKE DR. ROUX AND BRAND FOURIE. PERHAPS THIS CAN BE ARRANGED PRIVATELY SOMEWHERE IN EUROPE FOR AT LEAST AN EXPLORATORY ROUND OF TALKS EVEN THOUGH THE PROSPECTS ARE NOT ENCOURAGING.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: FOREIGN RELATIONS, CAT-A, AIDE MEMOIRE, GOVERNMENT REACTIONS, NUCLEAR TEST SITES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 17-Sep-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 22 May 2009
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977STATE223979
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: KMCCORMICK
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: X3
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: N770005-0722
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 2
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770951/aaaabreh.tel
Line Count: 144
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: eb531343-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN NODS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: NODIS, ONLY
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: NODIS, ONLY
Reference: 77 STATE 221176, 77 PRETORIA 4736, 77 STATE 218572
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 22-Nov-2004 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1233630
Secure: LOCK1
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SOUTH AFRICAN NUCLEAR ASSURANCES
TAGS: PARM, MNUC, SF, US
To: LONDON PARIS MULTIPLE
Type: TE
vdkvgwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/eb531343-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
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Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009